

**Health Equity Task Force established by Chapter 93 of the Acts of 2020**  
**Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, December 16, 2020, 10:30AM – 12:00PM**

**Members in Attendance:** Dr. Milagros Abreu, Michael Curry, Dr. Kiame Mahaniah, Dr. Myechia Minter-Jordan, Dr. Frank Robinson, Jeffrey Sanchez, Dr. Assaad Sayah, Hiram Shah, Beverly Stables, Rep. Chynah Tyler, Rep. Donald H. Wong

**Members Excused Due to Legislative Session:** Beverly Stables

**Members Not in Attendance:** Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, Rep. Carlos Gonzalez, Dr. Cassandra Pierre, Rep. Jose Tosado

**Presenters:** Sandra Wolitzky and Noam Yossefy, Office of MA Attorney General Maura Healey

Co-Chair Dr. Assaad Sayah opened the meeting and welcomed Health Equity Task Force members and the public then reviewed the open meeting law requirements for remote virtual meetings.

Co-Chair Michael Curry conducted a roll call to confirm attendance and that participants could hear the proceedings. This was followed by an approval of the minutes for the November 18<sup>th</sup> Health Equity Task Force meeting. A review of the agenda for the meeting was conducted.

Co-Chair Michael Curry, a MA COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Group Member, led a presentation and dialogue on the COVID-19 Vaccine plan in Massachusetts and findings of a survey of Massachusetts residents undertaken by MassINC polling group, a project sponsored by the Museum of Science and in partnership with the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers. Among the findings of the survey was a focus on trusted communicators of messages about the COVID-19 vaccine, which revealed that medical and health professionals were most trusted. Task Force members expressed great interest in the public education and information plans to reach diverse populations and to address vaccine hesitancy.

Dr. Myechia Minter-Jordan provided an update about the New Commonwealth Racial Equity and Social Justice Fund.

Sen. Julian Cyr provided a promising update that the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of Massachusetts will contribute funding toward resources for the Task Force to secure a consultant to support the Task Force's work on the final report.

Sandra Wolitzky, Deputy Chief, Health Care Division, and Noam Yossefy, Health Care Analyst, Health Care Division, Office of MA Attorney General Maura Healey led a presentation and dialogue on the Attorney General's "Building Toward Racial Justice and Equity in Health" Report. The Office of the Attorney General (AGO) intends for the report to spark substantive dialogue and stands ready to work with the Health Equity Task Force and all stakeholders. The AGO report aligns with the Health Equity Task Force's Interim Report and many presentations received by the Task Force.

The report calls for action in five domains and offers detailed directions for doing so:

1) data for identifying and addressing health disparities;

- 2) equitable distribution of health care resources;
- 3) telehealth as a tool for expanding equitable access to care;
- 4) health care workforce diversity; and
- 5) social determinants of health and root causes of health inequities.

Task Force members applauded the outstanding report and the action-oriented body of work and inclusive approach that went into it. The Task Force extended a commitment to ongoing collaboration with the AGO and all stakeholders to advance opportunities for equity.

The meeting closed with a discussion of future meetings and next steps.